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Horry County Historical Society

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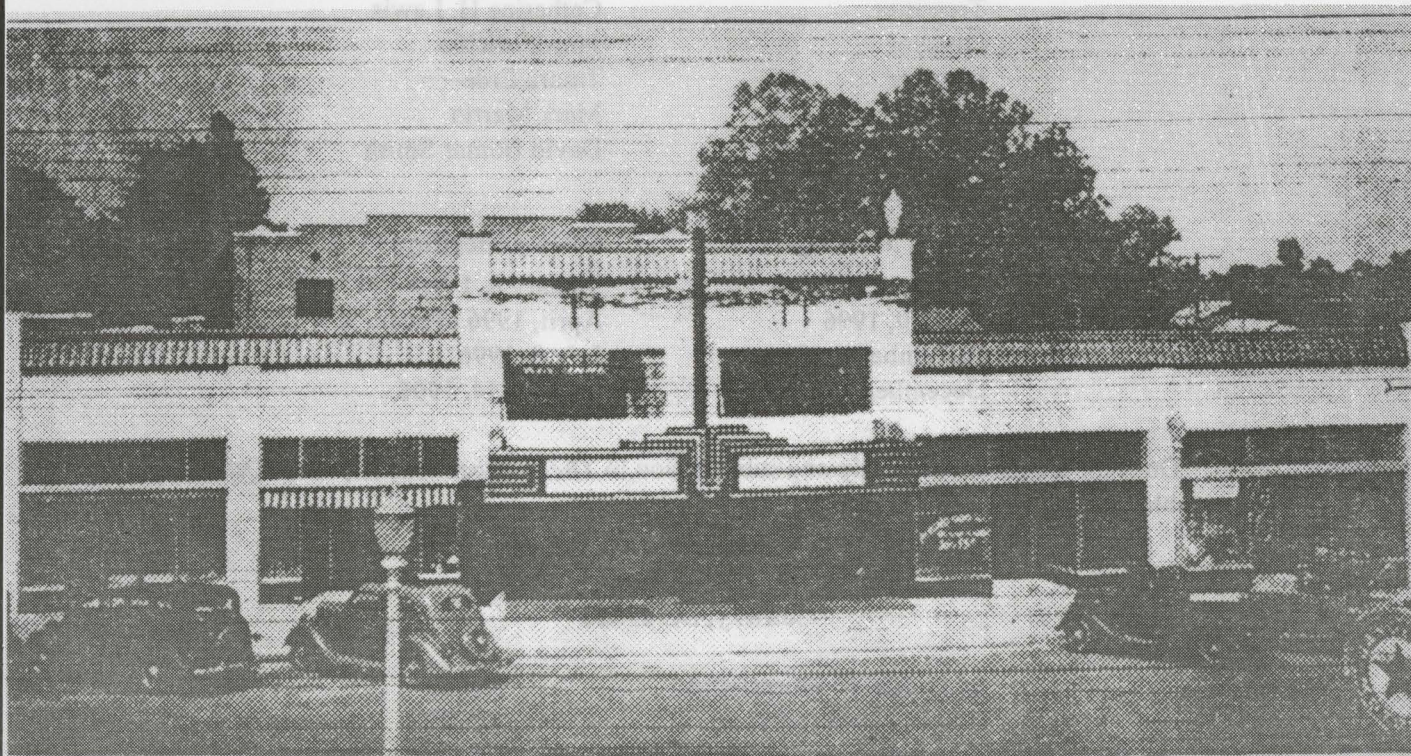
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No. 4



The Carolina Theatre as it appeared prior to its opening, August 6, 1936 (*The Horry Herald*. Photo by Warren Johnson)

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Conway, SC 29526

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QUERIES

Dewey J. Smith, 6102 Crabapple Place, Powder Springs, GA 30073: I am seeking information on the DORMAN family that settled in Horry Co., SC, about 1800. My g-g-grandmother was Drucilla DORMAN, who was born 13 April 1815 in SC. She married John HOPPER, b. ca1807 in SC, on 19 Sept 1834 in Greene Co., AL. She died 1 Mar 1901 in Kemper Co., MS.

In the 1820 SC Census there were only three DORMANS noted, all in Horry Co.-- Benjamin, John and John, Jr. Each had daughters under 10 years of age. However, by 1830, only Benjamin Dorman was still there and still had a daughter at home of the right age. The estate settlement of Benjamin DORMAN from 1849 shows only six children of the ten listed in the Census.

In the Alabama Census for 1850 seven DORMANS were listed as born in SC and all between 1800-1810. Can anyone help me?

D. L. Stephenson, 8302 Frederick Place, Edmonds, WA 98026-5033 (Tel: 206-775-1889): I am searching for information on one of my paternal great-grandmothers, Chrystillia JENERET (b. in NC c1834), d/o Elias JENERET, b. 24 Oct 1812 in North Carolina. Her mother was Ann Eliza THOMAS, b. in South Carolina 2 Mar 1811. Soon after Chrystillia's birth the family relocated to Pike Co., AL.

Linda Dayhoff Smith, 1000 Cold Branch Dr., Columbia, SC 29223: I am looking for information on Samuel MOORE (b. c1802, Horry Co., SC), m. (1) Margaret SINGLETON (b. c1802); (2) Sarah Irene GORE (b. c1845). I am especially interested in his second wife, Irene GORE, dau. of Charles J. GORE and his wife, Sarah A. I. _____. After Samuel Moore's death (date unknown), she supposedly married a TODD. Her death date is also unknown. Anyone having any information on Samuel MOORE and his two families, please contact me. I am a direct descendant of Samuel and Irene GORE MOORE and will share what I have!

Bill Mosley, 3923 Heartland Way, Turlock, CA 95382 wishes to correspond and share information with folks researching the surnames of DURANT, EDGE, TODD, STEVENS, and SINGLETON of Horry County, SC.

HEYDAY OF THE MOVIES IN CONWAY

By William T. Goldfinch

One day while visiting the Horry County Museum, located in Conway on Main Street at the site of the former post office, I commented to the receptionist about there being a motion picture theatre a half block away. The young lady, who was not a Conway native, looked at me in astonishment. She found it difficult to believe that a 999 seat theatre was in such close proximity to her place of employment! That made me wonder how many residents of the town are either unaware that it ever existed or that the auditorium still graces Main Street, behind the original entrance which is now occupied by two other businesses.

When I grew up in Conway in the forties and fifties the Carolina Theatre played a major role in the lives of the citizens of the town and of the county. Alas, today there is not even one movie theatre in Conway! Who would believe that in 1955, the year that I graduated from high school, there were two movie theatres operating downtown, the Carolina and the Holliday; one theatre for the colored people, the Hillside located on Race Path Street just off the corner of Race Path and Highway 378; and two drive-in theatres, the 501 Drive-In on Highway 501 a few miles west of town beyond the crossroads at Cultra Road as well as the Conway Drive-In on Highway 701 just across Crabtree Creek! During three brief periods Conway contained two first run motion picture theatres in operation to Myrtle Beach's one! The periods referred to are October 1, 1947-February 7, 1948, all of 1952, and October 1, 1953-December 31, 1953. During the period September 15, 1954-August 15, 1955, the Carolina operated basically as a first run house and the Holliday as a second run facility.

My primary purpose is to comment on the movies in downtown Conway during my formative years. However, a brief history of the motion picture business in Horry's county seat is imperative, although much information in that regard is at best scanty.

According to an article in the *Horry Herald* dated May 22, 1947, the first movie ever shown in Conway was exhibited in an open lot at the rear of the Kingston Hotel. That location is at the site of the Holliday Theatre where the last movie shown in a movie theatre was presented in August, 1986. The article commented that the showing of that movie in an outdoor setting "had nothing but the sky for a roof." I thought it interesting that recent performances in the burned out Holliday Theatre building were done in the same fashion. The original screening was operated by Jim Skipper. His equipment was said to have been purchased by "a foreigner" who installed it at one of the buildings on the eastern side of Main Street north of 4th Avenue.

McQueen Quattlebaum later purchased the equipment and continued the operation at the same site, which is located at about the same place as the front of the Carolina Theatre. He called his "theatre" the Casino. Mr. Quattlebaum closed up his operation when the Pastime was opened. I have been unable to verify the date that the Pastime opened. The earliest mention that I have found regarding the Pastime is an ad in the *Horry Herald*, March 6, 1919. The 1947 article stated that the Carolina Theatre was completed in 1935, an error, as that theatre opened August 6, 1936.

THE PASTIME THEATRE

Situated across the street from the Carolina Theatre was the Pastime Theatre. It closed in August, 1936, upon the opening of the Carolina. That building which remained in existence until it was torn down in May-June, 1947, captivated my imagination. The front of the building was rather stark, lacking a marquee. Instead, it had a sign in the shape of a "T" which hung out

over the sidewalk. It said "THEATRE" in large letters across the top and "PASTIME" vertically beneath. At the entrance was an inset where the ticket office protruded. To its left was the door to the auditorium. Out on the sidewalk was a door on the right which led to the projection room and balcony. When the Pastime opened it was said to be a modern playhouse, the equal to any in a town of Conway's size. It was where the first sound movie played in Conway. A record was utilized to be played while the reel was shown. Coordinating the two was indeed a task, I am told. The Pastime was built by H. G. Cushman and managed by his father-in-law, A. B. McCoy.

The closed Pastime Theatre intrigued me and I wanted to go inside and examine it from one end to the other. Many tales had been told to me about the theatre, arousing my interest in it. My sister, Claire Goldfinch Riggs, related just how she and her friend Jackie Frierson Nelson would remove the cushions from surrounding seats and stack them up so that they could get a better view of the screen. My mother, Jewell Pepper Goldfinch, would tell me about the rats roaming the theatre, which caused a neighbor of ours to spend more time watching the floor than the screen while attending a show! (In fact, when the Carolina opened, popcorn was forbidden. A movie with no popcorn--who can believe it? I recall when popcorn came to the Carolina in the late forties!) I am told that a certain patron would always sit in the same seat, chew tobacco, and spit the juice on the wall! My brother-in-law, Alton Oliver, who worked at one time as a projectionist at the Pastime, related how certain boys would slip in without paying and how the manager would cane them if they were caught.

In May, 1947, my chance to enter the theatre finally came! It was opened in order to tear it down. I had previously dreamed about the interior of the building and to my amazement it looked in minute detail exactly as I had dreamed it would. En route to a show at the Carolina, my friend Johnny Long and I discovered the doors of the Pastime open and went inside. We examined it all over. Time has dimmed my memory of the details of the interior, but I do recall an ornate stamped metal ceiling, side lights that protruded from each side wall with scalloped frosted shades. The theatre was small and I doubt if it had as many as three hundred seats. Its popcorn machine, which could be seen through the ticket window from the street was still there eleven years after its closing.



The Pastime Theater in 1922 from a publication by the Conway Chamber of Commerce entitled "Conway, South Carolina." (Photo by Warren Johnson)

Pastime Theatre

Program for part of week commencing March 10th.

MONDAY

GOOD COMEDY PROGRAM

Don't fail to see it. 10 & 20c.

TUESDAY

"HER FIGHTING CHANCE"

A splendid Drama. Featuring Jane Gray. A gripping Drama of the Northland. 20c and 30c.

MUSIC BY CONWAY BAND

WEDNESDAY

SEE CHARLIE CHAPLIN

You will like it. 10c & 20c.

FRIDAY

A BIG WESTERN

Texas Star, and one reel Comedy. 10c & 20c.

SATURDAY

BIG COMEDY PROGRAM

If you want to laugh, come out. 10c and 20c.



A photo of Claire Goldfinch Riggs (left) and Elizabeth Goldfinch Singleton (right) from a slide shown at the Pastime Theatre in the early 1930s. It was probably made by Warren Johnson. Slides of the children of the town were presented.

A 1945 photograph of the Carolina Theatre. It is from a feature on Conway presented in *South Carolina Magazine*.



THE CAROLINA THEATRE

The sixth of August, 1936, must have been a most exciting day in Conway's history. At 7:45 that evening, the Carolina Theatre opened its doors to the public. At the time of its opening, it was said to be the third largest motion picture theatre in the state of South Carolina. The announcement of the first performance in the facility stated that "No expense was spared in procuring the very best materials that money could buy" in bringing this building to Conway. "Entrance to the main auditorium of the theatre is from Main Street through a hundred and twenty foot lobby. This lobby is very attractive with its terrazzo floor, stamped metal ceiling, rough textured walls, and latest type of lighting fixtures and display stands. Entrance to the balcony is from Fourth Avenue." The auditorium contained the "latest type cushion-seat-and-back chairs, modernistic lighting fixtures, handsome carpets and draperies, and contains a spacious stage, completely equipped." The theatre was air cooled and heated with the air being "purified." The sound equipment was the RCA High Fidelity Sound System—"the finest money can buy." In fact that was the same sound system used at the time in Radio City Music Hall in New York City.

The first movie shown at the Carolina was "Private Number" starring Robert Taylor and Loretta Young, with news reel and comedies also on the bill. Thus began a 29 year run with two interruptions. At times there were live performances provided, such as celebrity appearances, stage shows such as the WSM Grand Ole Opry, and one particular attraction that I recall. On Saturday, August 26, 1950, hundreds of children crowded into the theatre to see "Cheetah," Tarzan's famed chimpanzee--or so we thought! The monkey was very large and feisty. When the manager of the theatre, Mrs. Edna Copeland, introduced the act, "Cheetah" took out after her and chased her off the stage. Then he leapt forward into the audience, like lightning, climbing row after row of seats, and then scaled a column, bounding into the balcony where he caused a great commotion before being summoned back to the stage by his owner-trainer. That poor chimp was killed in Darlington in the 1950s when he was left in a car on Main Street. He found some matches and set the car on fire. Only in the last couple of years did I learn that this chimp was not the real Cheetah, whom I saw recently on television, looking like an old man, smoking cigars! The "Cheetah" we saw was owned by a man in Darlington. However, we did get to see "Lash" LaRue in person. I cannot forget the skill with which the cowboy star cracked that bullwhip! When I was in high school in the fall of 1952, William Lundigan, a matinee idol, came to Conway with some starlets promoting the movies.

Incidentally, Mrs. Copeland, the manager of the Carolina in the forties until the fall of 1950, kept order with an iron hand. If you misbehaved, she would ban you from the theatre for perhaps a month--and she kept track of it, too. Your sentence could not be mitigated, no matter who you were. She sat in the auditorium during every performance and watched over the theatre like a hawk. And she was backed up in her job by the theatre's owner. After she left the Carolina, no one else kept things running as smoothly as she did. During the years she was at the theatre, her husband, Bill, was the projectionist.

The Carolina was first closed December 31, 1952, for renovation. It reopened October 1, 1953, and remained open and in operation until June 15, 1965. In 1964 it was closed for a few weeks after a fire which did some damage. The opening of the new, completely renovated Holliday Theatre signaled the end of the Carolina. The last motion picture which was shown at the Carolina was "John Goldfarb, Please Come Home" with Richard Crenna and Shirley MacLaine. I went to the theatre that evening with mixed emotions, being certain that it would probably never reopen. As I left the theatre and walked out of the entrance onto Main Street, I

saw for the last time a sight that will never be repeated: Conway's Main Street at night with both theatre marquees ablaze! The Holliday marquee was lit, touting its opening to the public on June 17th.

The Carolina was built by H. G. Cushman and first managed by A. B. McCoy. It was sold in August, 1940, to B. B. Anderson of Mullins, owner of the Anderson Theatre Company. Later the Hollidays of Galivants Ferry acquired an interest in it. In April, 1958, operation of the Carolina was taken over by Stewart and Everett Theatres of Charlotte, NC.



The Holliday Theatre as it appeared on June 16, 1965, the night of an "invitation only" gala prior to its public opening the next night. Mayor H. B. Huckabee and Arthur K. Goldfinch, Jr., president of the Conway Chamber of Commerce, gave the welcoming speeches. (photo by Eldridge Thompson, *The Field and Herald*)

THE HOLLIDAY THEATRE

Construction of the Holliday Theatre in 1947 was a great event for me, a boy of ten who all but worshipped the movies. Conway was going to have two motion picture theatres, somewhat like a big city! Conway was growing as there was a great deal of construction in town in the years immediately following World War II. The theatre's lovely marquee with its moving lights fascinated me. In the newspaper article about the theatre's opening, the writer compared it to any theatre in a large city.

I recall watching the marquee arrive in town on a truck and seeing its installation. How exciting it was! It was painted a sort of pine bough green, with the area behind the name "Holliday" being painted orange. The vertical sign hanging above the marquee was painted yellow. The neon on it was also yellow. The name "Holliday" was in green neon and in the center of the marquee was a circle of orange neon. The rest of the neon was blue, except for the neon above each side of the marquee, which was pink. This fine electric sign dominated Main Street, which it still does. It was painted blue the first time in 1952 or 1953, being repainted in 1965 and in 1994.

The theatre was built by Joseph W. Holliday and John Monroe J. Holliday of Galivants Ferry as a memorial to their father, George J. Holliday. It had 650 seats, a "cry" room for mothers with small children, and certain seats were said to be larger than others to accommodate more robust patrons. It was designed to be "as near fireproof as it is possible to build," an interesting fact in light of the building being gutted by fire some forty-two years later.

The main entrance to the theatre was on the right of the front, leading to a corridor approaching the ticket window at the rear on the left. Access to the lobby and auditorium was gained through two double doors. The front of the building contained a marble facade at street level. On the left of the front was the entrance to the balcony. In between the two entrances was an office occupied by Dr. V. B. Morgan, an optometrist. To the left of the ticket window was a staircase which led to the second floor where there were offices and an entrance to the balcony. When there was an overflow downstairs, a section of the balcony was designated for white patrons, the balcony being reserved for colored moviegoers. I recall sitting up there once and feeling rather strange that a single strand of rope marked off the white section from the other. Of course, had there been an overflow of blacks in the balcony, no part of the main auditorium would have been provided for them. By the time that the theatre was renovated and reopened in 1965, all patrons were able to utilize all sections of the theatre as should have been the case from the beginning. When the theatre was opened in 1947, a seat in the balcony was far better than one on the main floor. Balcony seats were more comfortable and, because of the height of the small screen, some neck strain was evident for the main floor patrons.

The first movie shown at the Holliday Theatre when it opened its doors on October 1, 1947, was "The Foxes of Harrow" with Rex Harrison and Maureen O'Hara. It was announced that the better movies would be shown for four days--unheard of at the time in a town the size of Conway. And during the rather short period of time that the theatre was open, many of them did play for four days. The theatre abruptly closed February 7, 1948, apparently a sudden decision as a couple of weeks before, its patrons were invited to come and enjoy its new heating system, which had replaced the original for some reason. It was reopened January 1, 1952, closed December 31, 1953, reopened in September, 1954, and closed for a ten year period in August, 1955. During that eleven month period, it was operated by A. C. and Ernest Williams as a second run theatre. During its first and second operations, it was leased by the Hollidays to the Anderson Theatre Company of Mullins.

While the Holliday operated in 1953, 3-D movies were shown. How many of us remember the special glasses we were required to purchase in order to enjoy the thrill of seeing a movie with depth! In this, the Holliday is unique, since 3-D movies were short lived, and I do not believe that one in that process was ever shown at the Carolina.

In 1965 the theatre was completely renovated, bearing little resemblance to its original self. There was a new lobby across the front. The marble that had previously adorned the street level facade was replaced. The original 650 seats were reduced to a much smaller capacity. However, the theatre was beautifully appointed, had new push-back seats and many features which made it quite up to date. Sad to say, before it closed its doors in August, 1986, the Holliday had been allowed to deteriorate. The lovely marquee began to burn out, so that when it was illuminated, very little of it remained operative. Finally, the operators simply ceased to turn it on. The final offering was "Top Gun" with Tom Cruise. After closing, the theatre became a church and was used as such until it was destroyed by fire in January, 1990.

Efforts are being made to restore the theatre. At the opening of the Main Street bridge in February, 1994, I made a small donation to the Holliday's restoration. I requested that my contribution be used to once again light the marquee, as one of my fondest dreams is to ride over the Main Street bridge at night, see the bridge lights glowing, and to see as well the Holliday marquee ablaze with light. A part of that wish is to see the bridge lights painted to match the bridge as those lights were originally. What an improvement that would be!

HOLLIDAY THEATRE
CONWAY, S. C.

Program Week of Feb. 2—Feb. 7

Matinee, 3:00—Night, One Show Only, 7:45
Saturday Continuous From 2:00 P. M.

MONDAY AND TUESDAY
Fred MacMurray—Ava Gardner in
"SINGAPORE"
MARCH OF TIME (T-Men In Action)

WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY
Randolph Scott—Kay Francis in
"WHEN THE DALTONS RODE"
COMEDY

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY
Victor Mature—Alan Ladd in
"CAPTAIN CAUTION"
Chapter No. 6, REX & RINTY

Carolina Theatre
CONWAY, S. C.

Program Week of Feb. 2—Feb. 7

Matinee—3:00—Night, One Show Only 7:45
Saturday, Continuous from 1:00 P. M.

Monday and Tuesday
Humphrey Bogart—Walter Huston in
"TREASURE OF SIERRA MADRE"
NEWS OF THE DAY

Wednesday
Louis Hayward—Barbara Britton in
"RETURN OF MONTE CRISTO"
Chapter No. 13, SECRET AGENT
—CASH NITE—

Thursday and Friday
June Allyson—Peter Lawford in
"GOOD NEWS"
(in technicolor)
NEWS OF THE DAY—"Summer Trails"

Saturday
Charles Starrett in
"RIDERS OF THE LONE STAR"
Chapter No. 9, SEA HAWK—"Mind Over Mouse"
—OWL SHOW SAT. NITE: 9:30 P. M.—
Bing Crosby—Bob Hope—Dorothy Lamour in
"ROAD TO RIO"
"DEADEYE DICK"

Coming: Road To Rio; Always Together

The week the Holiday Theatre first closed in 1948.



GRAND OPENING
NEW HOLLIDAY THEATRE
THURSDAY, JUNE 17 — 7:00 P. M.
Big Grand Opening Attraction!

ELVIS PRESLEY
in
"TICKLE ME"
with
JULIE ADAMS
JOCELYN LANE

in a ROCK and ROLLICKING storm that hits a rich and juicy Beauty Ranch!

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO COME, SEE AND ENJOY CONWAY'S EXCITING NEW THEATRE!

● **"TICKLE ME"** ●

Starts THURSDAY, JUNE 17 FOR 6 BIG DAYS!

BENTON CARD CO., BENSON, N. C.



Carolina THEATRE
CONWAY, S. C.

SUN. thru WED. JUNE 6-7-8-9

CHEYENNE AUTUMN

"ONE OF THE TOP FILMS OF THE YEAR!"
— Sunday Critic, N.Y. Times

TECHNICOLOR® SUPER PANAVISION® 70 - FROM WARNER BROS.

Starring
RICHARD WIDMARK · CARROLL BAKER · KARL MALDEN
SAL MINO · RICARDO MONTALBAN · DOLORES DEL RIO
 and
JAMES STEWART as Wyatt Earp **EDWARD G. ROBINSON** as The Secretary of the Interior

The last program for the Carolina Theatre in 1965 and the last program showing advertisements for both Conway theatres.

OTHER THEATRES

In 1947, there appeared in the *Horry Herald* an article announcing the forthcoming construction of "a theatre for the colored people of Conway." This theatre, the Hillside, operated from its construction off and on until the mid-1950s, I believe. It was not a large motion picture facility, had a plain facade with neon outlining it. There was a sign hanging vertically over the entrance which read "Hillside Theatre." Having never been inside it, I unfortunately am unable to describe its interior. The building was torn down, probably in the 1960s.

The first drive-in movie, the Conway Drive-In, opened in the late forties. When it opened, it did not have individual car speakers, but two loud speakers, one on each side of its screen, the back of which faced Highway 701. On a summer night the sound from the movie could be heard as far away as the six hundred block of Laurel Street where I lived. Since it was outside the city limits, it could have Sunday movies. My aunt lived near the theatre and close to her home was a church where a lot of shouting took place during services. The church complained about the Sunday movies, particularly the noise that those loudspeakers made. My aunt quipped that she

could not understand their complaint, since that congregation made so much noise itself that she was certain that they could not possibly hear the noise from the drive-in!

Later the drive-in acquired individual speakers. As I recall, that took place at the time that the 501 Drive-In Theatre was opened in June, 1951. The Conway Drive-In did not long survive the opening of its competition.

The Anderson Theatre Company built the 501 Drive-In, which had a run of several years. I recall going to its first movie, but I must admit that I do not recall the title. It was a free movie offered before the theatre had its real opening on June 10, 1951, with Gary Cooper and Ruth Roman in "Dallas." This drive-in had individual speakers, space reserved for colored patrons, and was the equal of any drive-in in the area. There is now a restaurant at the location of the theatre which is utilizing the same building that housed the concession stand and the projection booth. If you pass that restaurant, you will readily see that there is a second floor room above it. Also, if you look closely in the woods behind it, you can still see portions of the screen, which faced the highway.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY AUG. 17 - 18
DOUBLE FEATURE PROGRAM

GUNS OF THE BLACK WITCH

IN COLORSCOPE

STARRING DON MEGOWAN • EMMA DANIELI • SILVANA PAMPANINI

LOUIS PRIMA Presents



Twist All Night

EXTRA
IN COLOR
FREE TWIST LESSONS
How to Twist

CARTOON

501

DRIVE-IN THEATRE

CONWAY, S. C.

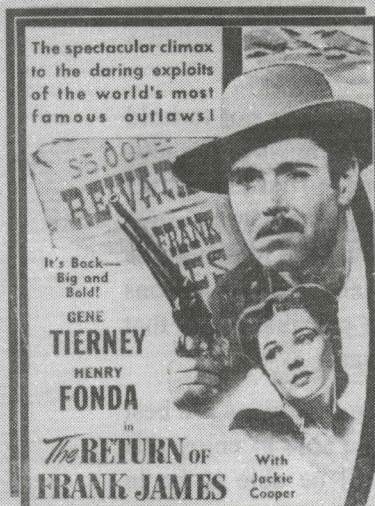
HAVE A NIGHT OUT!

GO TO A MOVIE!

Save THE COST OF A BABY SITTER
BRING THE KIDDIES

Program for week of August 12-18, 1962.

MONDAY & TUESDAY, FEB. 25 & 26



— Added —

CARTOON and SPORTS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27

— Double Feature Program —



— AND —



— Added —

COLOR CARTOON

THURSDAY & FRIDAY, FEB. 28 & 29

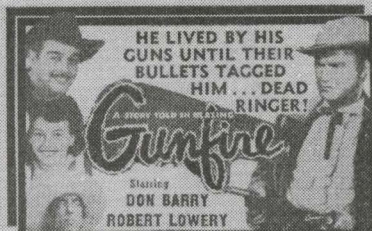


— Added —

CARTOON and COMEDY

SATURDAY, MARCH 1

— Double Feature Program —



— AND —

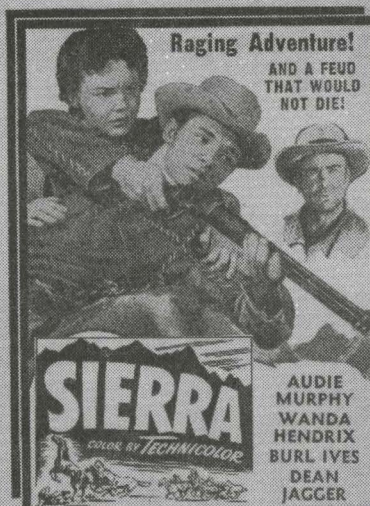


— Added —

CARTOON and NEWS

No. 8 of "LOST CITY of the JUNGLE"

SUNDAY, MARCH 2



— Added —

CARTOON - NOVELTY - MUSICAL - NEWS



CONWAY
DRIVE-IN THEATRE

Conway, S. C. — Telephone 8298

With the closing of the Holliday Theatre in 1986, an era in Conway suddenly vanished. In fact, there are presently only a few downtown theatres remaining in South Carolina. The last one in Columbia recently closed. In Florence, the only remaining single auditorium theatre saw its last performance on August 15, 1994. However, the Carolina in Conway remains, patiently waiting until it is demolished or becomes something different.

There is a saying that what goes around comes around. In this case it appears not to hold true. How many of us recall Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's "Leo the Lion" visiting Conway on a tour of the nation? Some are able to remember seeing "Gone with the Wind" for the first time at the Carolina, the Holliday or the 501 Drive-in. There are those of us who fondly remember such things as fire drills at the Carolina in the 1940s, the Saturday cowboy movies, cash nights at the Carolina on Wednesdays, the Saturday and Wednesday serials, the news reels, shorts, cartoons and comedies, as well as the late shows on Saturday nights. Does it seem possible today that Sunday movies were forbidden until the 1960s within the city limits of Conway?

What fun it is to reminisce about the Conway of my youth. In my opinion, movies are best shown in a theatre on a large screen. Perhaps one day again Conway will be able to enjoy this particular pastime within its city limits. If it ever does, I hope that I will be able to be in attendance!

THURSDAY - FRIDAY JUNE 10-11

SATURDAY JUNE 12

Movies

Are

More

Fun

At Our Theatre

SUN. - MON. - TUES. JUNE 13-14-15

Carolina Theatre Closes June 15, 1965. (No Program June 16, 1965)
New Holiday Theatre Opens On June 17, 1965

GROWING UP IN CONWAY

A BIOGRAPHICAL ORAL HISTORY BY SAMUEL ERNEST HENDRICK

Prepared by: Richard E. Jones

Samuel Ernest Hendrick, known to most Conway residents as "Tubby", was born in Horry County on January 28, 1921. Tubby's parents, Neil Hendrick and Minnie Cannon Hendrick, lived on a small farm about 10 miles west of Conway when Tubby was born. Tubby was the second of three boys with an older brother Bob and a younger brother Hoyt. Although Tubby has little recollection of life on the farm in rural Horry County, he remembers very well his family's move to Conway at the age of five. Tubby's childhood is typical of growing up in Conway during the 1920's and 30's. During his adult years "Tubby" as a professional fireman has had a profound impact not only in Conway but also throughout South Carolina.

DOWNTOWN CONWAY

In 1926, after our family moved to Conway, my father got a job as a butcher in the Conway Lumber Company General Store. The store was located on the corner of Third Avenue and Main Street across from City Hall where the city parking lot is today. At that time the downtown business district in Conway was about three blocks long with some 25 residential blocks adjoining the downtown area. There were two mule stables in the downtown area, the Burroughs & Collins Stable which was located on Third Avenue and Kingston Street, across the street from the Kingston Presbyterian Church. The Jenkins & Richardson Stable was located on Laurel Street between Third and Fourth Avenue, about where the Ann Booth Jewelry store now stands. I was raised with my brothers in a house located on the present site of the First Methodist Church parking lot. The streets in Conway during the 1920's were all dirt and the railroad train ran down the middle of Main Street. The railroad station was located in the Kingston Hotel which is where the old Holliday Theater is now located.

My brothers and I spent many hours watching the sidewalks and streets of Conway being paved during the late twenties and early thirties. My brother Bob and I attended the Burroughs School which is now the county tax assessors office. We walked to school down Laurel Street which was a distance of only three and a half blocks. My brother Hoyt began school three years later. Also, since we lived next door, it was very convenient for our family to attend church and Sunday school at the First Methodist Church. Also, most of our social activity was centered around the church and attending church sponsored functions.

MY TEENAGE YEARS

When I was twelve years old, I began to work on Saturdays and during the summer at the Conway Lumber General Store where my father was employed. Along about this time I got my driver's license. In those days, after driver licenses were required, you could get them at the age of twelve. All that was required was to ask a policeman to give you a test and he would ride with you; and, if he thought you could drive good enough, he would then issue you a driver's license. Also, my brother was working at the General Store doing the same job which I had been

hired to do. This consisted of sweeping floors, stamping tobacco, and riding a bicycle to deliver groceries. People ordered their groceries by phone which we would deliver to their home and place them on the table or in the ice box or refrigerator. My starting pay for this job was \$2.00 per week, which kept me in spending money.

Other kids my age sold freshly boiled peanuts during the summer for five cents a bag which were carried around Conway in a half bushel baskets. Some black kids shined shoes and also delivered groceries to earn spending money. Other young boys with bicycles delivered medicines and sodas from the drug store which in those days were delivered to both home and businesses. Also, one man rode a bicycle and delivered telegrams for Western Union. During the summertime most businesses closed on Wednesday afternoon. On many occasions the delivery boys who had bicycles would then get together and organize a bicycle race to Myrtle Beach. During the thirties it was approximately 20 miles from Conway to Myrtle Beach because you had to go through Socastee over what is now SC Route 544 and Route 707 to Myrtle Beach. As I remember, the man who delivered telegrams for Western Union, named L. B. Gilliard, won each and everyone of these races to Myrtle Beach.

In the summer, when the tobacco markets were open, Conway was a very busy place. Tobacco growers would bring their tobacco to Conway in mule-drawn wagons and spend the night in the warehouse until their tobacco sold. After the farmers got their money for the tobacco they would visit merchants along Main Street to pay their bills and buy groceries and supplies before returning to their farms.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

When I worked for the Conway Lumber Company General Store, I knew each and every family in Conway and where they lived. Most of the men in Horry County worked for the Conway Lumber Company. Also, during the winter alot of the farmers worked for the Conway Lumber Company. My father used every opportunity to teach me and my brother Bob the meat-cutting trade. During high school I became very much involved in high school sports and other school activities. Although I still continued to work weekends and summers, I was still able to spend good deal of time on the Waccamaw River. I've always had an attachment for the river and even today I live on the banks of the Waccamaw. My very good friend "Stick" Chestnut and I bought a boat and spent most Saturday nights in good weather, and sometimes in bad weather, camping on Mossy Ridge. Mossy Ridge is located where the Grainger Power Plant now sits. In 1935 my father bought a grocery store and meat market along with my brother Bob who had by then finished school. I also began to work weekends and summers at the family business known as Hendrick's Market which was located at 1022 Third Avenue.

Conway was growing during the late thirties with the business and residential areas spreading out. We had a grade school and a high school at Whittemore, a grade school in the Burroughs School building and a high school located at Laurel Street and Tenth Avenue. In 1935 Conway had the Pastime Theater, at 403 Main Street. The price of admission was ten cents and a bag of popcorn was five cents. I was, as might be expected, becoming interested in girls at that time; and for fifty cents I could put some gas in my father's car, take a date to one of the drug stores for a soda, go to a movie, and buy a bag of popcorn. Fortunately, since I worked on a regular basis, I had the money to do these things.

When I graduated from high school in 1938, I went into the family business full time.

We expanded our services to include selling the first dressed chickens in Conway. Prior to that time, all of the stores sold only live chickens. Usually the chicken pens were out behind the store where the customer would pick out the chicken. We would then catch the chicken, put it into a paper bag with a cut-out hole for its head, and tie a band around its feet, ready for the customer to carry the chicken home. My mother and one full-time employee dressed all the chickens. We also went into the making of our own brand of sausage. We grew sugar cane on the farm and had syrup made locally which we sold in our store. Our sausage business grew to the point we were shipping sausage to customers located outside the City of Conway.

In the late thirties, like many families in Conway, my father bought a lot in Myrtle Beach and built a house. In comparison to today's values, he bought the lot for \$300 and built a four bedroom, two bath house with a porch across the front and one side for \$2,100. We would spend the nights in Myrtle Beach and drive back to work like many other families in Conway did.

HOW I BECAME A FIREMAN

As I remember, in December of 1940, I was on a date one night and I kept hearing sirens blowing, and as I looked towards downtown, it appeared that the entire business district might be burning. I immediately went to check on our family store, which was not involved in the fire, but not too far away, located in the area of where Abrams Department now stands, there were several businesses burning. I stood and watched while the firemen did their job. It appeared that they needed some help and they accepted my assistance by putting me on a hose line in the alley. At one point the building started to fall into the alley and the other people who were on the hose with me turned loose of the hose and ran. I held on to the hose and it threw me up into the window of the building that was burning. I then had to wait for assistance to get down. After I got down I noticed that the loose hose had hit me in the mouth and left me with a good bit of loose skin. At that point I thought I had done what I could do in assisting the firemen. After going home and cleaning up I returned and watched while the fire was put out. This was the time my career in the Conway Fire Department began. In January, 1941, Bayliss Spivey, the assistant fire chief, thanked me for my assistance on the hose and asked if I would like to join the Conway Fire Dept. Shortly afterwards I did join the Conway Fire Department where I had a very rewarding career for the next 47 years.

WORLD WAR II

1941 was a very significant year for me. Other than joining the Conway Fire Department, I married my first wife, Vera McCreight on June 1, 1941. Two years later, in 1943, my brother Bob and I were drafted into the Army on the same day. My brother Hoyt had previously gone into a program while at Clemson College that would allow him to continue his engineering education while undergoing training at Fort Hood, Texas. Bob and I went through Fort Jackson, South Carolina then on to Fort McClellan, Alabama, where we received our basic training. We were privileged because of our experience at cutting meat to be sent to the Army's cook and baker school. We were taught how to cook and bake, how to make menus and serve nutritious meals to the troops. This was a very lasting experience that we have both used through the rest of our lives.

We went overseas to Europe and entered combat in the "Battle of the Bulge". There we saw combat constantly through two battles, the Rhineland Campaign and the Ardennes Campaign.

We spent the entire winter of 1944-45 in Northern Germany where the weather was mostly around 20 below zero and snow was almost waist deep. During this entire winter we never saw the inside of a building. The only protection from the weather we could get was in a hole in the ground. We wore all of the clothes that we had been issued which of course did not keep us warm. We never had a chance to change clothes all winter. We were treated well, given food as necessary, mostly K-Rations, and cigarettes when we needed them. In those days it was a great comfort to smoke a cigarette whenever you got the chance. Of course you could not smoke at night outside where the light could be seen.

We traveled on through Germany and along the banks of the Roer River. I was wounded during an artillery barrage when a falling tree fell across my back. I was evacuated from there and returned through France to England where I had back surgery. Afterwards I was shipped back home. Bob remained in Germany and about thirty days after I left, he was wounded by an artillery shell explosions which resulted in what they called "concussions" or "battle fatigue". After both of us ended up in the hospital had found out that our hands and feet had been frozen which we did not realize while we were out in the cold weather. As Bob was returned to the United States he was put in a convalescent hospital in Daytona, Florida, and I spent my time in a convalescent hospital in Camp Butner, North Carolina. Later I was sent to Miami, Florida, to one of the Army's rest centers during which time I visited Bob in Daytona.

COMING HOME

In January, 1946, I was discharged from the Army and returned back home to Conway. Bob and I both rejoined the family business. At the end of our three years in military service we were both awarded the Bronze Star Medal for Valor. I might add that I had completely grown up in those three years and was ready to get back those things that were important to me. I also returned to the fire department where I was made the Training Officer and Inspector. I was responsible for preparing and conducting the training. Things went well through the years and in 1949 I was promoted to the position of Assistant Fire Chief. In 1959 I was appointed Chief of the Conway Fire Department. Up until 1959 everyone was a volunteer except for one person who was a paid driver. After I became Chief in 1959, I was able to get two additional full-time, paid firemen so we could have three shifts with one driver on each shift. Also I or one of the other volunteers would fill in so one of the three paid fireman could have a day off or take their vacation.

In 1960, I became the first full-time, paid Fire Chief of the Conway Fire Department. In 1954, I had already left the family grocery business and gone to work for George McKoy in the radio and television repair business. Independent grocers were going out of business because of the growing supermarket competition. The independent grocer ran weekly or monthly charges and delivered where the supermarkets charged much cheaper prices on a cash and carry basis. During 1958 my brother Bob and my father sold the Hendrick Market.

From 1954 through 1960 I installed TV antennas which was a thriving business at that time. Also during this period I built my first home at 1005 Main Street. I lived at this location for 27 years during which time our children were raised. It is interesting to note that a year after I had become the full-time paid Fire Chief, George McKoy got out of the TV business and came to work at the Conway Fire Department as the Assistant Fire Chief.

When I first volunteered with the Fire Department, it was located at 1007 3rd Avenue

which is where the City Hall Office Building now stands. After I became Chief we began to make plans for a new Fire Station since we had long ago outgrown this facility. Also, the Third Avenue traffic made it extremely difficult to exit on emergency runs. We moved into the new Fire Station at 307 Wright Boulevard in 1964. I might add that before 1964 we also had a substation on Racepath just off Route 378 with an all-black volunteer company. We all trained together and Fire Chief Bayliss Spivey who was my predecessor is credited for organizing and establishing this all-black company, which is believed to be the second of its kind in South Carolina. Charleston had an all-black ladder company which was still in existence at that time. After we had moved into the new station we combined both existing stations at the Wright Boulevard location.

BAYLISS SPIVEY

As I previously mentioned, Bayliss Spivey, who preceded me as Chief of the Conway Fire Department, was really a unique individual. He was a banker and seldom did you find a person with his position and wealth being interested in a volunteer fire company. He was very dedicated to the Conway Fire Department. In 1949 when Bayliss Spivey appointed me Assistant Fire Chief, I began to attend various meetings throughout the state. After a while I was being introduced as the fireman from Conway who had a wealthy banker for a fire chief. Mr. Spivey was also a politician who served Horry County in the State House of Representatives. He also served a term as Horry County's Highway Commissioner. I observed and learned from Bayliss Spivey at a number of political meetings around the state. Because of his support and dedication I give much credit to Bayliss Spivey for many of the things that I have accomplished as Chief of the Conway Fire Department and the City of Conway.

We became known in the state's Firemen Association office as a quality fire department who could always be depended upon to support the various state programs. In 1965 I became involved with the State Fireman Association when I was selected as statistician for this organization. This year was also one of personal tragedy for me as I lost my wife Vera after 24 years of marriage. My daughter Eloise had finished college by this time and was a registered nurse working in Columbia, South Carolina. I had two sons living at home, Sam who was fourteen years old and David who was twelve. The next five years were very trying as father who kept house, cooked meals, and made sure my sons got off to school in the mornings. My military training as a cook really came in handy.

THE FIREMEN ASSOCIATION

After being involved with the state's Firemen Association for three years, I was elected president in 1968. South Carolina had very little in firemen training programs at this time. We had one instructor who would travel around the state spending a week with each fire station conducting training programs. I was determined that South Carolina firemen would have a Fire Academy for conducting better and more extensive training programs. This became my primary goal while serving as president of the state's Firemen Association. With the help of many friends and particularly Governor Robert McNair we began the state's Fire Academy which today has become second to none. When I say "second to none" it is qualified by Professor Sartane from Oklahoma University who spent five days helping me to organize the plans and curriculum for the state's Fire Academy. Professor Sartane stated that if we were successful in this effort that

South Carolina would have a Fire Academy "second to none". The University of Oklahoma, which is the largest publisher of universally accepted Fire Training Manuals, stated in a January 1995 publication that "the South Carolina Fire Academy is truly one of the finest fire training centers in the world". This 19 million dollar facility located 200 acres on Route 215 can accommodate 250 students.

After my term of president of the State Firemen Association expired in 1969, I was asked to serve as Chairman of the state's Fire Academy Committee.

THE 1970'S & 80'S

During this period of time another significant happening in my life occurred, I married my wife Ruebelle Joyner in 1970. This marriage gave Ruebelle and I five children with the addition of Debbie and Brian. In 1995 we now have nine grandchildren and one great granddaughter all of whom are a real blessing to both Ruebelle and myself.

It was decided in 1960 by Mayor Jim Lewis that Conway was not large enough at that time to have both a paid Fire Chief and Building Inspector; therefore I would have to serve in both positions. Needless to say, I was kept very busy trying to keep up my fire training duties and set up a Building Department that would issue building permits and make inspections. I served as the Building Inspector in addition to my fire department duties for 22 years. In 1975 I took the first examination by the Southern Building Code Congress International who publishes the building codes used in South Carolina. I was fortunate to be one of the 13 out of 55 people who passed this three-day ordeal, which gave me my certification as a Building Inspector. After retiring from the Fire Department in 1987, I continued to work for the city in a part-time capacity as a Building Inspector. In 1995 I began my 55th year working for the City of Conway.

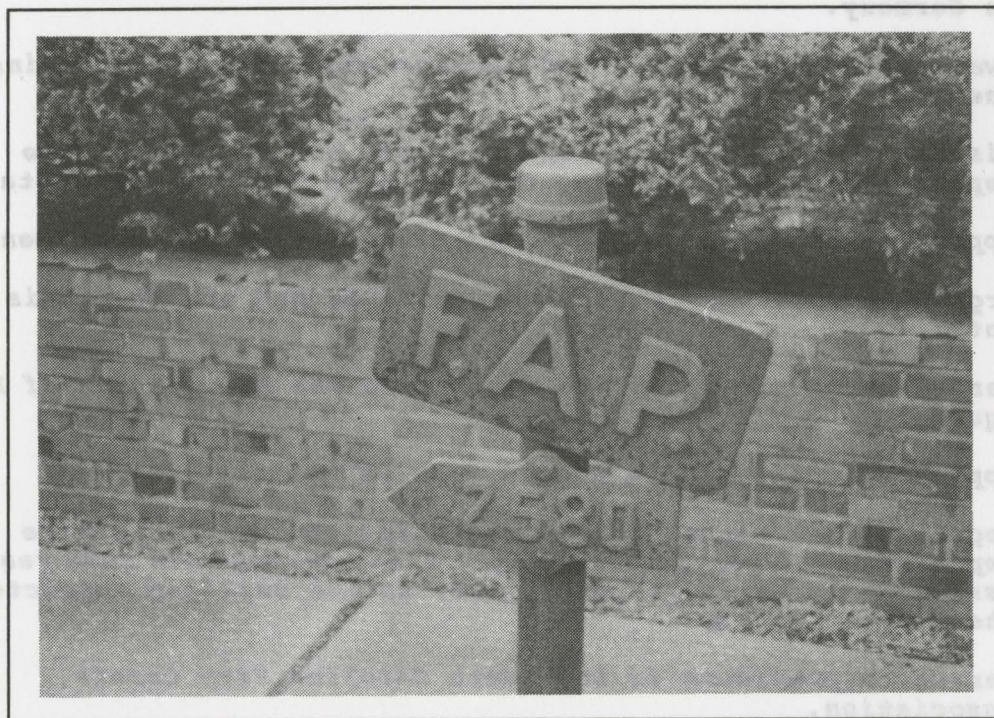


"Tubby" Hendrick surrounded by a few of his many fireman and civic awards.

**Samuel Ernest "Tubby" Hendrick
Chronology of Major Events and Awards**

- 1941 - Joined the Conway Fire Department as a volunteer.**
- 1943 - Joined the US Army served with 78th "Lightning" Infantry Division in Germany.**
- 1945 - Awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious achievement against the enemy.**
- 1946 - Discharged from the Army and returned to the Conway Fire Department as the Training Officer with the rank of captain.**
- 1949 - Appointed as Assistant Chief of the Conway Fire Department.**
- 1952 - Organized the Horry County Rescue Squad and operated this squad until 1972.**
- 1957 - Served as president of the South Carolina Association of Rescue Squads.**
- 1959 - Appointed Chief of the Conway Fire Department.**
- 1960 - Began duties as the "full time" Chief of the Conway Fire Department and served until 1987. Also, during this same year, was assigned the extra responsibility as the Building Inspector for the City of Conway.**
- 1963 - Served as president of the South Carolina Fire Chiefs Association.**
- 1969 - Appointed president of the South Carolina Firemen Association. During this four year term the South Carolina Fire Academy was organized and began operations on a state-wide basis.**
- 1970 - Served as president of the Horry County Fire Chiefs Association.**
- 1975 - Served as chairman of committee under the South Carolina Firemen Association to seek a better retirement for firemen. During the following year, firemen were made eligible to belong the South Carolina Policemen's Retirement system.**
- 1981 - Inducted into the South Carolina Firemen Hall of Fame. "Tubby" was one of the few which have been inducted while still alive.**
- 1987 - Upon retirement Tubby was awarded the Order of the Palmetto which is South Carolina's highest award for public service.**
- 1989 - Received the Fritz Turner Award which the highest award presented for public service by the South Carolina Fire Chief Association.**

GUESS WHAT IT IS



This unusual cast iron sign marker is located in the City of Conway on the southeast corner of 10th Avenue and Main Street. It is believed to have been installed during the 1950's and as you can see it has acquired considerable rust over the years. If you have information regarding this sign marker, please call Richard E. Jones, (803) 347-9828. A request is being made to the City of Conway to remove the sign for permanent retention as a City artifact.

Materials for publication in the IRQ are welcomed and may be submitted to:
The IRQ Editor, The Horry County Historical Society, P. O. Box 2025, Conway, SC 29526

TEACHING DAYS, LITTLE RIVER, SC (FIRST TEACHING JOB - SEPTEMBER, 1919-MAY, 1920)

by
Rebecca Clark Snyder

[Rebecca Wilson Clark was born August 16, 1899, in Laurens, South Carolina. She graduated from Winthrop College in 1919 and taught school in North and South Carolina until her marriage to Theodore Snyder, a builder and a farmer, in 1931. With Mr. Snyder she had four sons, Theodore, Jr., John, Charles, and Henry. During her marriage she lived first in Cedar Mountain, North Carolina and later on a farm near Walhalla, South Carolina where she resumed teaching for another 11 years before retiring. She lived a long and productive life documented in a memoir completed in 1987, three years before her death on April 2, 1990, at the age of 90 in Greenville, South Carolina, where she lived after the death of her husband in 1970. Rebecca Clark Snyder is survived by her four sons.]

When I graduated from Winthrop College in May 1919, I was offered several teaching jobs. My good friend, Alpha Bolt, and I accepted work at Little River, SC, a village on Little River Inlet, near the ocean and Cherry Grove Beach, as well as Conway, SC.

Our three-room school house was a one-story building painted white, having huge wood stoves in each room for heat. When a play was to be given, or if cake walks and box suppers were on, two of the rooms could be "thrown together" to give added space.

In the spring, sand fleas were so plentiful they got into our rooms, nearly disrupting classes. One reason for this was the "no-fence law," so hogs and pigs liked living under the schoolhouse, and they spread the fleas. At our complaints, the trustees had the hogs and pigs removed and boarded up all sides of the openings.

Getting from our home town of Laurens to Little River was one round-about-way and took many hours. Alpha and I took the CN&L (Columbia, Newberry, and Laurens) train to Columbia, spent the night there, catching an early morning train to Florence, changed trains in Florence for Chadbourne, NC. Here we changed to a train going to Conway, SC. Arriving there we were met and driven, over oyster bed roads, to Little River. It was just as complicated going back home to Laurens.

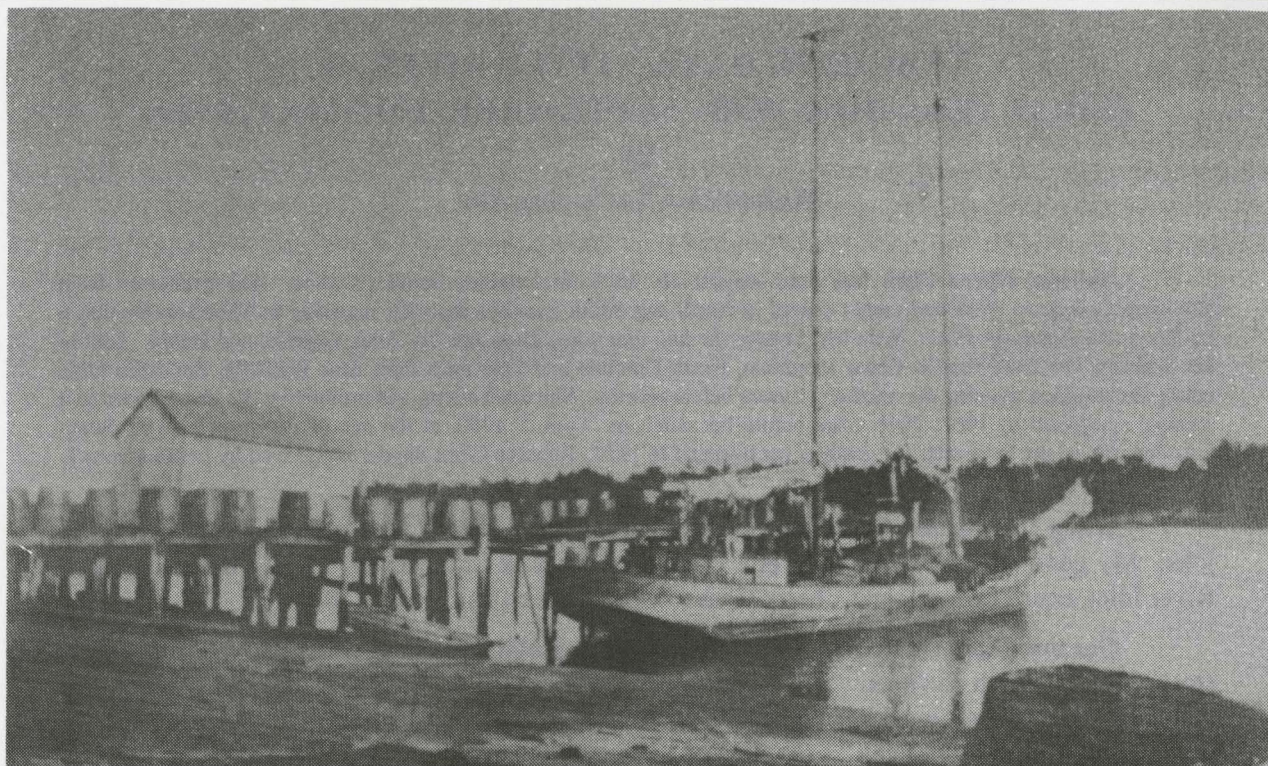
Little River consisted of one very large general store, run by the Stone family. Here, you could buy anything from food to clothes; a bank, one or two smaller stores, a Methodist Church, and a "good many" homes. There was one doctor available, Dr. J. H. Stone.

The location of the town was on Little River Inlet, there were many beautiful live oak trees, hung with gray moss, flowers of many varieties, including yellow jessamine. It was not far to the North Carolina line, and many people went to Wilmington, NC, to shop.

When the rum boats came in from Wilmington, you would hear groups of sailors, high on rum, near town, singing as loudly as did Long John Silver when he let out with "Fifteen men on a dead man's chest, ho, ha, ho, and a bottle of rum!"

The school was supposed to operate only eight months, paying a teacher \$80.00 per month. We three teachers decided to raise money and extend school one more month. This we accomplished by having cake walks, box suppers, and oyster roasts. What fun it was to raise money this way! We made enough to teach the extra month.

At the small Methodist Church we three teachers took part in all activities. I was chosen to teach the men's Bible class (me—only twenty years old and never having had a Bible course in my life!) Alpha Bolt was the organist, and Nettie Mitchell taught the primary Sunday School class. We were so inexperienced, all except Nettie, who had taught there the year before.



The Prince lying at dock, just in from Wilmington with supplies for us.

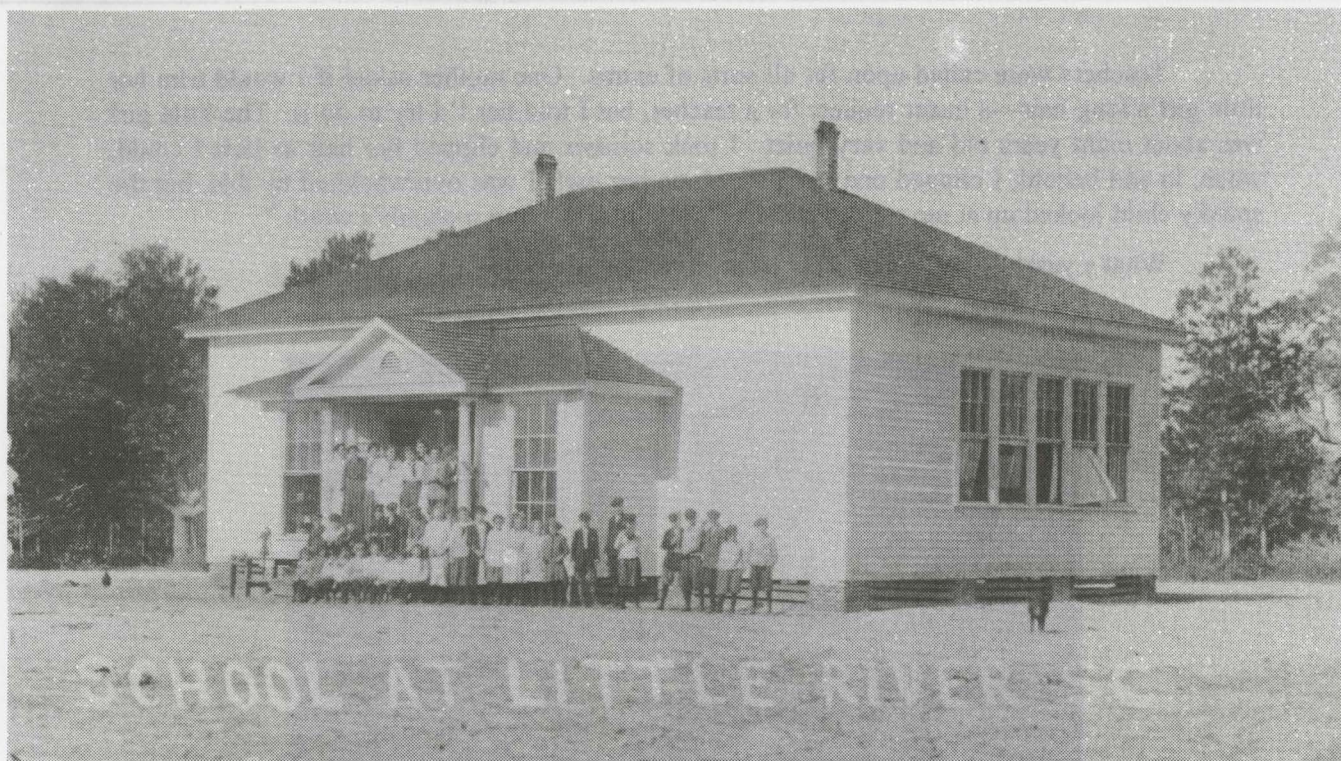
When any person died, we teachers were asked to keep a wake all night before the burial. We were glad to do this for the families, but how hard to keep awake all night long! Usually someone would serve us hot coffee around midnight.

Once or twice we were called upon to sit up all night with ill people. I recall one night, especially, when I was sitting up with a little girl who had fever. I was to massage her with alcohol to cool the fever. There was no electricity, and as the lamp was turned quite low, and as I was very drowsy, I reached for the alcohol and got the wrong bottle. I gave the child a good rub-down with Coca Cola. The little girl survived. Good ad for Coca Cola, if they see this!

There was a flu epidemic that lasted several weeks, so we three teachers pitched in and helped the family where we boarded. All members of the family were ill. We pumped water from a pump in the back yard, we cooked the meals, and we helped all we could until the family recovered. And we taught every day, too! As the house was heated by fireplaces in each room, it was not easy to bring in wood, build fires, and take up ashes. We were young. We survived!

I shall never forget my introduction to venison, many sea foods, and the pleasures of oyster roasts. Swimming at Cherry Grove Beach, moonlight picnics, square dances, shopping in Conway, a trip to Wilmington at Thanksgiving, en route to Spring Hope, NC, to visit my Aunt Martha Rebecca Gardner, cutting hair for small pupils, helping coach the girls' basketball team, getting up plays—memories!

Several days per week I taught piano lessons after school. I had six pupils. At the closing recital, held in the parlor of the home where I boarded, I made a "foxy poppa." After I thought I had introduced each pupil as she went to play, lo and behold, I forgot to call on _____ Stone. Her mother arose from the chair and said, "Miss Clark, you did not call on _____ to play." I could have vanished, had it been possible, for my overlooking the daughter of one of the school's trustees. Anyway, I begged her pardon, called on her to play, and that was that—a mistake I really was sorry I made.



The school at Little River, Horry County, SC where I taught my first year, 1919-1920.

As I taught grades 8, 9, 10, and 11, plus three pupils in the third grade, my hands were more than full. A big help was a "pony" for use in teaching Caesar; another was having correct answers in my math books.

To add to my chores, I was asked to help with the girls' basketball team. Alpha and Nettie and I coached as best we could, and our team did very well playing against other small schools.

Little River was in a picturesque setting of beautiful live oak trees, hung with moss. At the docks we enjoyed seeing boats of many kinds. Once a lovely yacht owned by Mr. Eaton (writing paper millionaire) docked there for several days. We teachers were invited aboard to see the yacht. I told Mr. Eaton that our school had no library and I hoped to start one. He had a good selection of books on board and gave them to me to start a school library.

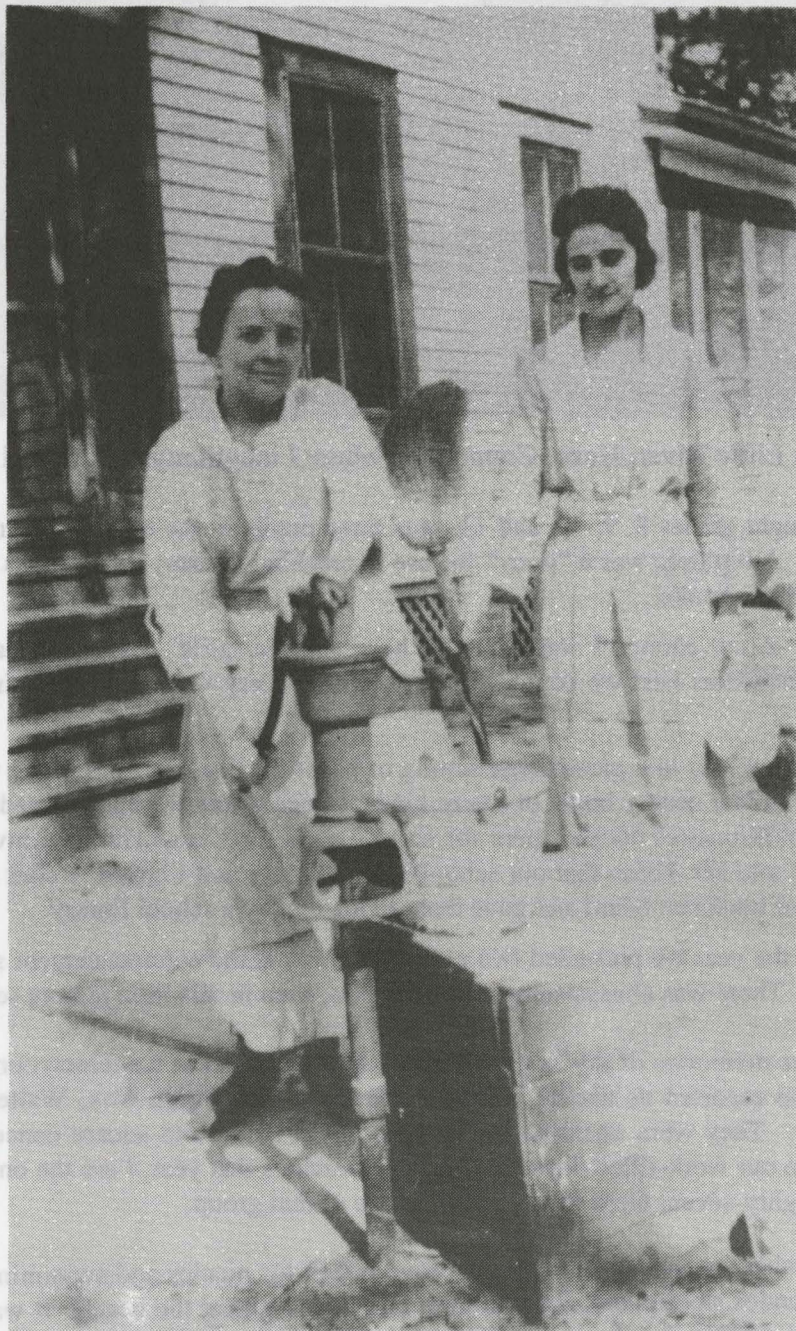
During the year we presented two plays: one was at the commencement season. It kept everyone busy. There was always something going on, even in this little remote settlement.

I cherish the memories of my first year of teaching. Naturally, we three young teachers met young men who escorted us about. I shall never forget J. Marion Cox, Walter Bessant, and Clyde Bellamy. They were attentive to the three of us, took us to square dances, to ride, and added variety to our work-filled days. Of the three teachers that year, I am the only one left. As I am nearing eighty-seven, there soon will be no one of that group.

Memorable are the trips to Cherry Grove Beach for picnics and swimming. In 1919-20 no houses or condos stood there. I recall only one building near the beach. It was a large shed used by fishermen. One Sunday, in the little church, the pastor referred to the teachers in a very stern manner, saying we should not go swimming in bathing suits, but should wear dresses. I wonder what he would think of bathing suits in 1986, were he living.

Teachers were called upon for all sorts of extras. One mother asked if I would trim her little girl's long hair—a queer request for a teacher, but I told her I'd try to do it. The little girl was about eight years old and very quiet. I took scissors and clipped her hair as best I could, when, lo and behold, I clipped one small notch on her ear! I was overwhelmed by this, but the spunky child looked up at me and said, "Miss Clark, it didn't hurt a crumb's worth."

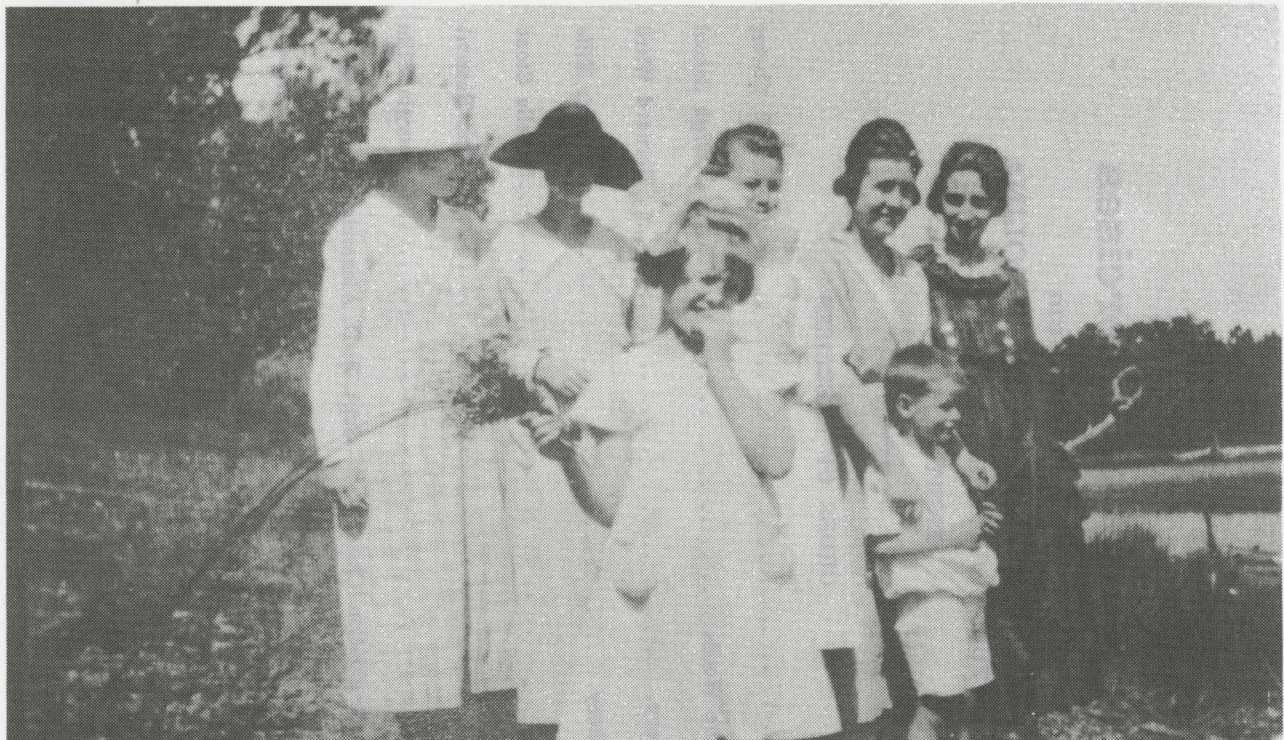
What a year! What memories! What experiences!



We work during flu day.



At the Lumber mill.
(Rebecca Clark is on the left with the fur collar.)



Rebecca Clark is on the far right.

Graduation Exercises

School Auditorium
LITTLE RIVER, SOUTH CAROLINA

TUESDAY EVENING, MAY 18TH, 1920.

EIGHT O'CLOCK

ORDER OF EXERCISES

- Invocation... ..Rev. J. E. Carter
- Voices of the Woods... ..High School
- Class History... ..Bernard Ward
- Class Prophecy... ..Francis Ellis
- Class Will... ..Isabelle Stone
- Poem... ..Edna Bessent
- Piano Solo... ..Georgia Ellis
- Address to Graduation Class... ..Supt. B. D. Alexander, Conway, S. C.
- Farewell Song... ..High School

PRESENTATION OF DIPLOMAS.

BENEDICTION.

Commencement Exercises

GIVEN BY THE

Pupils of the Little River School

MONDAY EVENING, MAY 17, 1920—8:00 O'CLOCK

School Auditorium

1. Butterfly and Brownie Drill... ..Primary and Intermediate Grades
2. Recitations: "Apple Blossom Time;" "Cept You".....Eva Stone
3. "Much Ado About Betty"—A Play in Three Acts.

Cast of Characters.

Lin Leonard, Betty's one best bet... ..Marion Cox
Major Jartree, not only bent, but crooked... ..William McCorsley
Ned O'Hare, a jolly young honeymooner... ..Bernard Ward
Mr. E. Z. Ostrich, who has written a wonderful film play

—Mary Alma Bellamy
Dr. McNutt, solid ivory from the neck up... ..Herman Humphrey
Jim Wiles, a high school senior... ..Joe Wilson
Archie, a black bell boy at Hotel... ..Delaney Ward
Officer Riley, who always does his duty... ..Madeline Bellamy
Officer Dugan, from the Emerald Isle... ..Alva Lee Carter
Mr. Ebenezer O'Hare, a sick man and a submerged tenth

—Lester Bellamy
Mrs. Ebenezer O'Hare, "Birdie," the other nine tenths... ..Edna Bessent
Aunt Winnie, Betty's Chaperone... ..Miss Nettie Mitchell
Lizzie Monahan, Betty's maid, with a vivid imagination

—Miss Alpha Bolt
Ethel Kahler, a high school admirer of Betty... ..Nora Ellis
Violet Ostrich, a film favorite, Ned's bride... ..Isabelle Stone
Mrs. K. M. Diggins, a guest at the Hotel Poinsettia... ..Eunice Randall
Daffodil Diggins, her daughter, "Yes, Mamma!"... ..Frances Ellis
Miss Chizzle, one of the North Georgia Chizzles... ..Wilma Randall
Pearlie Brown, Violet's Maid, a widow of ebon hue... ..Lottie McCorsley
Violet, Violet Ostrich's little girl, aged seven... ..Louise Stone
Diamond, Pearl's little girl, aged six... ..Eloise Thompson
Betty, the star of the Movagraph Company... ..Ruth McCorsley

Synopsis

- Act I. Betty's Apartments near New York.
Married in haste.
a. Recitation:.. ..Clara Randall
Act II. Parlor D of the Hotel Poinsettia, Palm Beach, Fla. Three days
later. Betty loses her memory.
b. Recitation:.. ..Woodrow and Walter Bessent
Act III—Same as Act II. A full honeymoon.

End.

HORRY'S BLACK DELEGATES TO 1868 CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

by Catherine H. Lewis

At the end of the Civil War the political leaders of South Carolina put in place a Constitution designed to retain control of the state in white hands. With carpetbagger and black control of the Legislature this was bound to be repudiated. Indeed, it would have to be replaced for the state to recover its full statehood in the union.

Across the state the Republican Party sponsored Union Leagues for blacks. Their purpose was to register voters and, of course, to control the way in which those voters cast their ballots. In preparation for the convention every effort was made to register black voters. The registration books show for the first time the names which former slaves had taken for their own. On January 14, 1868, elected representatives met in Charleston to draft the second constitution for South Carolina since the end of the Civil War.

Georgetown voters elected Franklin F. Miller, Henry W. Webb and Joseph H. Rainey to represent them. Rainey would later become the first black man elected to the national House of Representatives.

The voters of Horry elected the Rev. Henry Wallace Jones and Augustus Reeves Thompson, both black. Biographies of these former slaves appear in the *Marion Star* for February 26, 1868. The information is supplied by an occasional correspondent who signed himself "Waccamaw", and in its contemptuous tone reflects the bitterness of the times.

According to this account, Jones was born [c1829, 1880 Census] in North Carolina on a "turpentine farm" and came to Horry in 1852 "in the service of Ruben Wallace." He ran a still in which the pine sap was broken down into spirits of turpentine and rosin. According to "Waccamaw", he dealt in other kinds of spirits as well. He also had quite a reputation as a fiddler until he was converted. He joined the Conway Methodist Church. His religious fervor caused him to become an exhorter. This led him into conflict with the Rev. Mahoney, a white Irish minister in Conway, who tried to have him put out of the church.

His owner sold him to a "Mr. Beaty," perhaps Thomas W. Beaty of Conway. His skills in distilling turpentine would have made him valuable to Beaty, who owned a still located on Kingston Lake near 4th Avenue.

In spite of opposition from Mahoney he became a preacher, building a strong following among blacks. After the war he became by virtue of his leadership ability the founder of Bethel, the first African Methodist Episcopal church in Horry. He also became one of the organizers of the Union League. He operated a small grocery store.

Augustus Reeves Thompson was "born the property of Amon Thompson, a man of considerable station" about 1815 [estimated from the 1880 Census]. When Thompson died, Augustus was sold to William S. Reeves to satisfy the debts of the estate. According to the *Star* correspondent, he was six feet tall, thin and spare. He could neither read nor write.

Amon Thompson evidently thought highly of his slave's ability. He made Augustus captain of his flat boat running between Red Bluff and Bucksville, transporting naval stores on the first leg of their journey to market. He also was responsible for rafting logs to the mill.

The delegates to the Constitutional Convention were a mixed group. Seventy-six of the 124 were black, fifty-seven of them former slaves. Other delegates were mostly whites from the North who had settled in the state either before or after the war. Many were illiterate, but a few able men took control. The Constitution of 1868 which they drafted before they adjourned on March 17 was in many ways very enlightened.

It gave the vote to all men, black and white, and removed the property owning qualifications for holding public office. It outlawed dueling and legalized divorce. And, while not giving women the vote, it did grant them limited control over their own property.

Among its last acts the Convention set in motion an election based on the new rule. In Horry County the Republicans nominated Jones for the Senate and Thompson and Steven H. Thompson to the House. The Democratic ticket named Capt. Henry Buck for the Senate, and the Rev. Zadoc Bullock and W. W. Waller for the House. Horry County was the only eastern county in South Carolina to go Democratic.

THE DIMERY SETTLEMENT INDIAN DESCENDANTS IN THE SOUTH CAROLINA LOW COUNTRY

By Forest Hazel

When one examines a map of Horry County, one is struck by the wealth of place names of American Indian origin. The county is bounded by the Little Pee Dee and the Waccamaw Rivers, and marked by such exotic sounding localities as Socastee and Wampee. Yet most of the county residents today are unaware that many of their neighbors have a significant amount of American Indian ancestry, and that most of these can be traced back to the area in Dog Bluff Township known as the Dimery Settlement.

The Dimery Settlement has been largely forgotten by most of Horry County's citizens, but at one time, during the early decades of this century, it was frequently mentioned in local newspapers, usually with speculation as to the origins of its inhabitants. Uncertainty about the exact racial origins of the various families living in the Dimery Settlement created something of a local mystery, and was the cause of several legal cases brought because members of the settlement allegedly married "outside their race."

Systematic research began on the history of the Dimery Settlement in the fall of 1994, when a group of Indian people in the Horry County area, with assistance from a grant from the Administration for Native Americans, hired the author to begin assisting them in their quest for Federal Acknowledgment as the Chicora-Waccamaw Indian Tribe. There were several theories advanced to explain the existence of this distinct group of people: (1) they were remnants of the tribes such as the Waccamaw which had once lived in Horry County; (2) they were derived from some foreign race such as Spanish or Portuguese; (3) they were the result of a combination of Civil War deserters, escaped slaves, and Indians, all living in the swamps near Gunter's Island around the time of the Civil War; or (4) they were an offshoot of the so-called Croatan Indians (now Lumbee) of Robeson County, North Carolina. None of these theories is supported by historical records that have come to light to date.

What is known for sure is that in 1809, in Marion County, John Dimery married Elizabeth Hardwick, and by 1813 they had moved to Horry County where he purchased 300 acres of land from William Lewis. This tract, for which he paid \$50, was described only as being "in Gunter's Islands", which lies on the east side of the Little Pee Dee River. An examination of other land plats indicate that the Dimery land was probably not directly on the river, but somewhat to the east, on the north side of Brunson Swamp. This land, with more acquired by John Dimery and his sons in later years, would form the heart of the Dimery Settlement.

John Dimery first appears on the Horry County Census in 1820 as a "free person of color", presumably living on his land in the Dog Bluff section. It should be noted at this point that the fact that John Dimery and his family were counted as "free colored" should not be taken to mean that they were necessarily of African descent. An examination of records from various areas of the South in the first half of the 1800s shows that nearly

every group now identified as Indian was counted as "colored" on the Census, as well as in many local records.

The Nottoway and Ginkaskin of Virginia were all counted as "free colored" in 1830, even the ones still living on what was left of their reservation lands. The Meherrin, Chowan, and Saponi descendants of North Carolina were all listed as "Mulattos" or, simply, "colored," after moving off their reservations and adopting European lifestyles. In some cases this was a deliberate effort on the part of non-Indians to forestall any effort to reclaim land; in other cases it was simply a matter of the Indian people no longer seeming like "real" Indians in the eyes of their neighbors after losing so much of the traditional culture.

It is very unusual to find Indians listed as such after about 1780 in any part of the South. The last apparent mention of the Pee Dee and Waccamaws came in 1755, when John Evans mentions in his journal that the Cherokees and Natchez Indians killed some Pee Dees and Waccamaws "in the white people's settlements." The location of the tribes at that time is uncertain, some believe they were living near the present-day Moncks Corner, SC.

In any case, it is clear that the Dimery Settlement people did not consider themselves to be of African descent. In a newspaper account from the April 23, 1921, Horry Herald concerning a dispute between two of the families in the settlement, it states, "They are mixed as to race, claiming that they have Indian blood in their veins."

It is possible that there were other Indian or part-Indian people living in the Dog Bluff area when John Dimery settled there. It is also possible that that was the reason he bought that land there. It is a historical fact that there was a late Woodland Period Indian village site located near Jordanville containing examples of pottery from the Pee Dee period., which is generally thought to cover the 1200-1650 A.D. period. So it is possible that there may have been a vague recollection in Dimery's family of their people having once lived in that region. It is an interesting thought, but one which is unfortunately not supported by any hard evidence at this point.

By 1850 the Dimery Settlement had grown to at least four families, those of John Dimery, Willis Thompkins, Cockran Thompkins, and Sara Cook, for a total of some 27 individuals. Oral tradition states that around this time John Dimery gave the land for Pisgah Church, and his family may have been the so-called "free colored" members who attended the church in its early years. There are supposed to be some Dimerys buried near Pisgah Church in a small cemetery.

There is no indication that the Dimerys lived in any way differently than their neighbors, no mention of any particular Indian customs or language, and they appear to have participated in the rural society at least to a limited extent. The Indian people raised cotton, corn, and later tobacco, much the same as their neighbors, and participated in community activities such as hog killings, barn raisings, and wood sawings where community members combined their efforts to help individual members of the settlement.

An article in the *Horry News* dated December 23, 1876, gives a "List of Colored Voters in Horry County who voted the Democratic Ticket at the General Election on the 7th of November 1876." This list shows that in Dog Bluff Township, David Turner, George Cooper, Jas. B. Cook, J. L. Dimery, Willis Tompkins, John Dimery, James Dimery, and David Dimery all voted Democratic.

The community had grown large enough by the 1870s that it was decided to form a church which would serve the needs of the Dimery Settlement. On March 25, 1878, Sara Desda Turner, whose son Hugh G. Turner would later become one of the most successful farmers in the area, sold two acres of land to John and James Dimery (two sons of the original John Dimery) "for the use of church purposes." A wooden church was constructed on the site in 1886. Ellis Cooper, one of the Indians who helped build the church, was also one of the pastors there. In the August 11, 1887, Horry Herald, it was announced that on September 7 Rev. J. W. Todd would preach at the "Dimerys Church." The official name of the church soon became Bethel, or Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, and had grown to a congregation of over 100 before it burned in 1983. The church is gone, but the cemetery still remains and is well tended by relatives of the persons buried there. Rev. Elwood Ammons, one of the pastors there, and a grandson of Ellis Cooper, raised money to erect a fence around the cemetery, which helps preserve the site.

Shortly before World War I a second Indian church was built in the area, across Brunson Swamp on what is now Jenó Road. This church, called Holly Hill Free Will Baptist Church, was smaller than Bethel and was attended mainly by the Hatchers and some of their relatives. Charlie Dimery was remembered as one of the leaders of this church, the "head man" who found pastors to come and preach at the church. One custom formerly practiced by members of the Settlement was that of decorating graves with seashells such as whelk and clamshell. This is a practice found among many coastal Indian tribes, and probably represented one of a very few cultural survivals.

A school also existed in the Settlement at least since 1909. It was apparently referred to as the Dimery School in its early years, although the official name in the county records was Pine Level School. The school, along with the churches, served as a focus for community activities and provided social structure for the settlement.

Pine Level School also served as a source of controversy in the larger community, due to the somewhat uncertain ethnic status of the children who attended. Excerpts from the October 18, 1923 issue of the Horry Herald article headlined "Dimery Pupils Seek a School" make this clear. The somewhat lengthy report begins, "The long-standing contest over the admission of children of the Dimery Settlement in Dog Bluff, to schools set apart for white pupils was due to come up here before the county board of education on Tuesday of last week. . . . There was a proposition made in line with the petition to set apart what is known as the Pine Level School in the Rehobeth District as a school which could be attended by the Dimery people and their relatives, and by people of the like kind from other school districts in that part of Horry County. . . ." The white trustees of the school had, in 1922, attempted to force the teacher, Minnie Sellers, to class the school as a colored school. When the parents found out, they withdrew their children and petitioned the county board of education to rectify the situation. The community leaders (including several intermarried whites) who signed the petition included R. B. Nobles, H. G. Turner, A. B. Dimery, W. H. Elvis, Noah Hatcher, Mary Hatcher, Gatlin Johnson, Vander Hatcher, D. W. Caines, and Walter Caines. The result was that some of the students were allowed to attend the Aynor schools for a few years, and then the Pine Level School was opened again, once again classed as a white school. The Horry Herald printed the 7th month honor roll for Pine Level School on April 2, 1936. The students

named included Joy Turner, Norton Turner, Eugenia Turner, Jay Turner, Mack Cooper, Zula Elvis, Beulah Elvis, Julian Turner, Annie Turner, Mattie Nobles, Louise Hatcher, Loyd Turner and Margaret Elvis.

In 1949 a survey was done of all the county schools, at which time it was reported that the school, which was two rooms, had no electricity or running water. It was also reported that part of the ceiling was out. The school had no library, but was serviced by the county bookmobile. Average daily attendance at the time of the survey was 14 students. This school operated until 1955, when it was closed permanently after the enrollment declined to about 9 students.

The first years of this century also saw several interesting court cases involving members of the Dimery Settlement. At least four cases arose out of the South Carolina laws prohibiting miscegenation, or marrying outside of one's own race. In two of the cases white men, Daniel Alford (1908) and Furman Hughes (1921) were prosecuted for marrying "Negro" women, Susie Dimery and Patty Dimery, respectively. In the other two cases, two brothers, W. I. Hatcher (1908) and Julius Hatcher (1905) were charged with being "Negros" and marrying white women, Manda Mishoe and Martha Mishoe, respectively. Only in the case of Furman Hughes was the defendant convicted, and that seems to have been because he plead guilty to the charge. He was sentenced to a year at hard labor or a fine of \$500. In the other cases, the defendants were not convicted, and some of the *Horry Herald* accounts are instructive concerning prevailing attitudes of the time. In the February 16, 1905, account of the Julius Hatcher case, the writer states "Absolutely no proof was made showing the presence of Negro blood in Hatcher's veins. . . . The Hatchers are a dark-skinned people, but if there is any Negro blood in them, no one knows when or whence it got there--if anything it may be Indian or Spaniard."

Each of the cases seems to have arisen out of a matter of personal spite held by the prosecuting witnesses against the defendants involved, since there were other intermarriages between whites and members of the Dimery Settlement with no issue ever being made of the matter. One interesting note on Julius Hatcher is that he is remembered by several of his relatives as having been an "Indian Doctor" who used herbs and roots to heal, and that he moved to Scranton, SC, and ran a small store where he dispensed his medicines.

The Hatchers were an excellent example of how uncertain a position members of the Dimery Settlement, and similar people in the South, occupied in official records such as the Federal Census. The Federal Census for 1920, for example, records William I. Hatcher, living in Galivants Ferry Township as white. His brothers Noah, Julius, Robert and Vander, living in Dog Bluff Township, are recorded as Mulatto, and their uncles, Peter and William, Living in Robeson County, NC, are enumerated as Indians.

This sort of treatment led many of the Indian people in the settlement to leave the area, moving a few counties away to places where they felt they could be treated more fairly. The Hatchers, Coopers, and Dimerys among the Lumbee Indians of Robeson county, NC, are all connected with the Dimery Settlement. One of the last traditional healers among the Lumbee was Vernon Cooper, a nephew of the Ellis Cooper who helped build Bethel Church in the Dimery Settlement. These Coopers came from the Marlboro County area, and claimed Cheraw ancestry. Several families drifted back to

Marlboro county, near the area of the old Cheraw Indian settlement, which appears to have been the area where many of the families originated.

The original John Dimery says in the 1850 Census that he was born in North Carolina, which, if accurate, was probably just over the border in either Anson or Columbus county, NC. There are Dimerys in both areas early on. His children usually stated that he was born in South Carolina. The Hatcher name appears to originate from a white family of Indian traders who lived along the North Carolina/Virginia border in the early 1700s and who traded with the South Carolina tribes.

There is much that may never be known about the history of the Dimery Settlement, But is clear that the citizens of Horry County who are connected to it by blood can be proud of the ties they have with the original inhabitants of this country. The rest can learn with interest about an unusual ethnic island which adds its flavor to the richness of Horry County's history.



Members of the Horry County Historical Society and their guests gather at the site of the Confederate battery, Fort Randall, located in Little River Neck, during the Society's 1995 Spring Tour.